

What is claimed is:

1. An appliance for administering a reduced pressure treatment to a wound comprising:

(a) an impermeable cover for covering and enclosing the wound and for maintaining reduced pressure at the site of the wound;

(b) a seal for sealing said cover to tissue surrounding the wound; and

(c) reduced pressure supply means for connection to a source of suction for supplying said reduced pressure beneath the cover.

Sub B1  
2. The appliance as recited in claim 1 comprising a screen for preventing overgrowth of wound tissue, said screen being locatable between said wound and said cover.

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3. The appliance as recited in claim 2 wherein said screen comprises a porous sheet.

Sub B2  
4. The appliance as recited in claim 1 wherein said reduced pressure supply means comprises a screen having an open cell foam and said reduced pressure supply means includes a segment of tubing embedded within said screen.

5. The appliance as recited in claim 1 wherein said cover is sufficiently rigid to protect the wound from impact and said reduced pressure supply means comprises a suction port on said cover.

6. The appliance as recited in claim 5 wherein said seal includes a cuff around the periphery of said cover for preventing said cover from digging into the skin during the treatment.

5cb B3 7. The appliance as recited in claim 1 wherein said seal includes an adhesive material on the cover for securing said cover to the tissue surrounding the wound.

8. An apparatus for treating a wound comprising:  
    (a) a vacuum system for producing a reduced pressure; and  
    (b) a reduced pressure appliance operably connected with said vacuum system for applying said reduced pressure to the wound, the appliance including:  
        (i) an impermeable cover for covering and enclosing the wound and for maintaining reduced pressure at the site of the wound;  
        (ii) a seal for sealing said cover to tissue surrounding the wound; and  
        (iii) reduced pressure supply means for connection with the vacuum system for supplying said reduced pressure to the wound.

9. The apparatus as recited in claim 8 wherein said vacuum system includes a collection device for collecting fluid aspirated from the wound.

5cb B4 10. The apparatus as recited in claim 9 wherein said collection device includes means for halting said application of reduced pressure to the wound when said fluid exceeds a predetermined quantity.

11. The apparatus as recited in claim 8 wherein said reduced pressure is from about 2 in. Hg below atmospheric pressure to about 7 in. Hg below atmospheric pressure.

12. A method of treating a wound comprising the steps of:

- (a) applying a reduced pressure to the wound; and
- (b) maintaining said reduced pressure until the wound has progressed toward a selected stage of healing.

Sub B<sup>5</sup> 13. The method as recited in claim 12 wherein said reduced pressure is from about 2 in. Hg below atmospheric pressure to about 7 in. Hg below atmospheric pressure.

14. The method as recited in claim 12 wherein said applying step comprises steps of:

- (a) locating an impermeable cover over the wound, said cover having a suction port;
- (b) sealing the periphery of said impermeable cover to tissue surrounding the wound; and
- (c) operably connecting said suction port with a vacuum system for producing said reduced pressure.

Sub B<sup>6</sup> 15. The method as recited in claim 14 further comprising the step of placing a porous screen over the wound prior to said locating step.

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16. A method of treating a wound comprising the steps of:

- (a) securing an appliance for applying reduced pressure to the wound; and
- (b) providing reduced pressure to said appliance in alternating intervals of application and non-application.

14 ~~17~~. The method as recited in claim ~~16~~ <sup>13</sup> wherein said reduced pressure is from about 2 in. Hg below atmospheric pressure to about 7 in. Hg below atmospheric pressure.

~~15~~ <sup>18</sup>. A method of pretreating a skin flap to promote attachment of the flap to a wound comprising the step of applying reduced pressure to a region of skin tissue adjacent to the wound prior to detachment of said skin tissue adjacent to the wound to form the flap from said region of skin.

add A' >  
add B <sup>15</sup> >